

## HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

## TRIBUTE TO SPECIALIST CASEY BYERS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President. I rise today to pay tribute to an honorable soldier who has fallen in service to his country. Specialist Casey Byers of the 224th Engineer Battalion died on the 11th of June in Al Taqaddum, Iraq when an improvised explosive device detonated beneath his Humvee. Specialist Byers was a young native of Schleswig, IA, who was only 22 years old. I salute his patriotism and his sacrifice for the sake of freedom.

Specialist Byers was a proud American who joined the Iowa National Guard in 1999. He graduated from Ar-We-Va High School in 2001 where he participated in football and track and later attended Iowa Lakes Community College. Specialist Byers graduated from the combat engineer qualification course in July 2004 and volunteered for duty with the 224th in Iraq. This was his second tour of duty in the Middle East.

Casey Byers has earned the highest gratitude of the entire Nation and today I want to recognize him with the respect he deserves. His sacrifice reminds us of the incredibly high cost of ensuring freedom. My prayers go out to Ann and William Byers who grieve the loss of their son, Paul and Jennifer Byers who grieve a lost brother, and his infant daughter Hailey who grieves the absence of her father. I also extend my prayers to all of the family, friends, and neighbors of Casey who are touched by his passing. I ask my colleagues to join me and all Iowans in remembering Specialist Casey Byers. Such men as Casey Byers inspire us to hold in ever higher esteem the ideals of freedom and service. His valor shall certainly not be forgotten.

## SGT. LEIGH ANN HESTER

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, today I want to take this time to commend one of the many American heroes defending freedom around the world for her service and courage. Her act of bravery is worthy of the remembrance and recognition of a grateful nation.

On March 20 of this year, SGT Leigh Ann Hester was escorting a convoy near Salman Pak in Iraq, when over 50 insurgents ambushed her troops, raining fire from AK-47's and RPGs. On this fateful day, Sergeant Hester faced that fire with no fear of her own fate, risking her life to save others—and save lives she did. She led a successful counterattack, brought the convoy to safety, and earned the everlasting gratitude of her fellow soldiers and the undying respect of the American people.

And so a grateful nation has bestowed Sergeant Hester of the 617th Military Police Company with the Silver Star. She is the first woman to earn this rare honor since Mary Roberts Wilson received the medal for gallantry during the Battle of Anzio in World War II. Sergeant Hester's her-

oism is more than worthy of this recognition. Her unwavering commitment to her fellow soldiers is a shining example of the exceptional courage that defines our brave soldiers across the world.

In winning the Silver Star, Sergeant Hester contributes to many legacies. She honors the legacy of generations of women who have served our Nation and the over 15,000 selfless women who have served so valiantly in Iraq and her bravery in the face of overwhelming adversity underscores the growing role of women in our Armed Services. She also continues the legacy of military service in her family. Her Uncle, Carl Sollinger, served honorably in Vietnam, and her grandfather, Oran Sollinger, was awarded a Bronze Star for his valor in World War II. Now, Sergeant Hester, a 23-year-old retail manager from Bowling Green, KY, seeks to expand on her own legacy of service with a career in law enforcement.

SGT Leigh Ann Hester has shown bravery in keeping with the finest traditions of service, courage, and heroism in our military. She is a special citizen, a role model, and a patriot. I call on my colleagues to join me in honoring her and in so doing honor every brave American, at home and abroad, who toils for freedom.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT  
ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each day I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

Last year in San Francisco, a male contacted an Asian gay man under the pretense of receiving a professional massage. Once inside the man's residence, the suspect impersonated an undercover cop and pulled out a gun. He used a rope to tie the victim's hands and ankles, then assaulted and robbed him. The case is being investigated as a hate crime.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

## BOLTON NOMINATION

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the nomination of John Bolton to be our next Ambassador to the United Nations. Unfortunately, I was unable to be here yesterday, when another vote was taken in regard to Mr. Bolton's nomination. Had

I been here, however, I would have voted in support of Mr. Bolton.

Despite recent controversy over this nomination, I still believe that John Bolton is a fine candidate for the position of ambassador to the U.N. I have seen the complaints and the information provided as a result of those concerns, but I still believe that his credentials and background make him a qualified person for the job. His experience with an aside from the U.N. is one consisting of a great deal of reform. He has long been an advocate for U.N. reform throughout his career and has been vocal in proclaiming the need for the United States to take the lead in facilitating the U.N. in its goal of international peace and security. The U.N. is now facing allegations of corruption in the Oil for Food Program and from other senior officials. At this time more than any other, I firmly believe we must send someone who has experience reforming an organization.

John Bolton comes to this nomination after years of experience in the international community. He has performed pro-bono work for the U.N. in Africa and worked as the U.N. Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations from 1989 to 1992. In the last 4 years, Bolton has been instrumental in urging U.N. agencies to take steps to stop the spread of dangerous weapons, while calling on all member states to criminalize the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In the Moscow Treaty, which reduced our operationally deployed nuclear weapons arsenal by two-thirds, John Bolton served as the principal negotiator. As Under Secretary of State, John Bolton helped construct the G8 Global Partnership, a global initiative to focus on safeguards and verification of nuclear programs. The G8 Global Partnership establishes a principle that countries under investigation will not be allowed to serve on the International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA.

In these times of atrocities against humanity, an honest, functioning U.N. is needed. I think John Bolton will help the U.N. head in that direction. I do hope to have an opportunity to work with John in that capacity and know he would serve tirelessly and thoughtfully in the many challenges ahead.

RUSSIAN "PROFILES IN COURAGE"  
HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, on May 31, the first edition in Russian of President Kennedy's famous book, "Profiles in Courage," was published, and to mark the occasion, our Ambassador in Moscow, Alexander Vershbow, held a reception at the U.S. Embassy.

As part of the occasion, the Embassy honored the winner of a "Profiles in Courage" essay contest organized by the Embassy, in which Russian high school students were encouraged to write essays on political leaders who showed extraordinary political courage of the kind described by my brother in